



Canadian Association of University Teachers
Association canadienne des professeures et professeurs d'université

December 2, 2021

BY EMAIL: secretariat@tru.ca

Ms. Marilyn McLean
Chair of the Board
Thompson Rivers University
900 McGill Rd
Kamloops, BC
V2C 0C8

Dear Ms. McLean,

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is the national federation representing more than 72,000 academic staff and professionals at over 120 universities, colleges, and institutes in all provinces. I am writing to express to you and the entire Board of Governors our serious concerns about the mishandling of complaints made against senior leaders at Thompson Rivers University.

I am aware that at least 13 current and former TRU employees have filed complaints alleging sexual harassment, discrimination, and anti-Indigenous racism on the part of two senior administrators: Matt Milovick, Vice-President of Finance and Administration, and Larry Phillips, Associate vice-president of People and Culture. While the University has commenced an investigation into the allegations, it appears that both individuals remain active in their positions.

Given the seriousness of the allegations and the positions of power both Mr. Milovick and Mr. Phillips occupy within the administration, it would be appropriate and is demanded that both be placed on paid leave pending the outcome of the investigation. This is standard practice in such situations to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the investigation. In cases where similar complaints have been made against faculty members, it is routinely the case that those accused are placed on paid leave until an investigation is completed. Given that those accused of misconduct are responsible for, amongst other things, human resource matters at TRU, it is even more imperative that they step down from their duties to ensure both in practice and appearance there is a fair and impartial investigation.

The allegations that have been made demand that the Board act swiftly to reassure the academic community that all steps are being taken to investigate the complaints properly and fairly, consistent with your legal obligations to ensure a workplace free of harassment and discrimination. The decision to keep Mr. Milovick and Mr. Phillips active in their positions during the investigation

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casts clouds of doubt over the entire process. It also threatens to inflict serious reputational damage and disrupt the workplace for all employees.

I urge you and the Board to direct that Mr. Milovick and Mr. Phillips be placed on paid leave until the investigation of the complaints against them has been concluded.

Sincerely,



David Robinson
Executive Director

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cc: Tara Lyster, President, Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association
Brent Fairbairn, President, Thompson Rivers University